

Dear Ladies/Gentlemen,

As an Amateur Radio Operator and somewhat new to the hobby, the only reason I proceeded forth with obtaining my license was because the code test had been eliminated to get started in the hobby.

It is in my opinion, that the morse code should be eliminated as a requirement for upgrading to General Class, however it should be held in place for upgrading to that of Extra Class at a minimum of 15WPM.

With the availability of cell phones and other forms of electronic communication devices readily available to the public at large, continuing to require those interested in upgrading their license or obtaining their first license as a Amateur Radio Operator is only going to serve too make Amateur Radio less and less attractive.

Amateur Radio as a hobby will flourish with individuals upgrading their licenses to enjoy HF. I for one know of several that are not able to copy code even at 5 WPM. I know it doesn't sound like a lot, however for those with injuries or other organ damage, it not only serves to prevent them from upgrading and enjoying HF, but prevents them from being able to support such groups as A.R.E.S in a variety of different capacities.

The code was implemented as a form of communication between stations because there was no other technology available by way to communicate, however when I listen to HF unless on a certain bandwidth, I do not hear morse code, I hear speech, or nothing more then long distance simplex operations taking place. There is no morse code being exchanged when operating in this capacity.

Morse code is great as a novelty, and has it's place, however not in the 21st Century. The United States Military does not even allow their radio operators to transmit morse code at any time yet they serve our country and protect our freedoms, that we enjoy today. Why should be forced in order to enjoy serving our communities on a volunteer basis, be required to learn morse code when amateur radio is the only place it will ever be used.

I for one would rather pick up a cell phone then too attempt to beat into my head a language that has no value in today's society.

Thank you for your time and efforts to bring the Amateur Radio hobby into the 21st Century. The times of only using morse code have not been used for years, when a distress morse code signal is sent out from a ship at sea, the Coast Guard will not acknowledge it, as they are not allowed to transmit morse code.

Again, this is why many are not upgrading to the next level in amateur radio, and will remain in place as Technician Class Operators until such time as this requirement is removed from that of upgrading to General Class Operators.

With all do respect,

Sincerely,

Randall Schwanke
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